

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

Claims 1-28 (Canceled).

Claim 29 (New): A method of manufacturing bent glass sheets, comprising:

bringing glass sheets to their softening temperature, then the glass sheets are caused to travel over a shaping bed of advancing elements for advancing the glass sheets which are arranged along a path having a circular arc-shaped profile, the glass sheets being bent in a first direction of advance over the bed according to the radius of curvature of the bed and also being able to be bent in a direction transverse to the first direction depending on the shape for the advancing elements, the glass sheets progressively assuming their shape on entering the shaping bed and over a first shaping zone; and

hardening the glass sheets by tempering or cooling in a second zone of the shaping bed until the glass sheets leave, and then the bent glass sheets thus obtained are recovered,

wherein the shaping bed has a profile extending in a circular arc of more than 90° and wherein, on leaving the shaping bed, the hardened glass sheets are moved in a direction opposite that in which they were fed in.

Claim 30 (New): The method as claimed in claim 20, wherein the glass sheets are brought horizontally to the shaping bed, and are also conveyed horizontally on leaving the shaping bed.

Claim 31 (New): The method as claimed in claim 29, wherein the glass sheets are caused to travel along a flat trajectory in a heating furnace so as to bring the glass sheets to

the softening temperature, then along the curved trajectory of the shaping bed, tangential to the flat trajectory.

Claim 32 (New): The method as claimed in claim 29, wherein a prior bending operation is carried out by sagging the glass sheets brought to their softening temperature before causing them to travel over the shaping bed.

Claim 33 (New): The method as claimed in claim 29, wherein the glass sheets are caused to travel over the shaping bed along an ascending path, backing rollers being associated with the advancing elements of the shaping bed in every zone thereof in which the glass sheets need to be retained, and wherein each hardened glass sheet is overturned on release from the last roller/backing roller pair associated with the shaping bed, the glass sheets thus overturned being received by a conveyor belt and then taken over by a roller conveyor to be transferred toward an exit point.

Claim 34 (New): The method as claimed in claim 33, wherein a hardened glass sheet is overturned by causing it, on its release, to be projected under the effect of its speed so that it strikes, by way of its front lower end edge, against an upper part of an idle roller whose axis is parallel to that of the advancing elements of the shaping bed, the hardened glass sheet then tilting about a line of contact with the idle roller under the effect of its weight to drop onto the conveyor belt in the overturned state.

Claim 35 (New): The method as claimed in claim 33, wherein a hardened glass sheet is overturned by causing it, on its release, to be projected under the effect of its speed so that it is applied, by way of its lower face, to a roller whose axis is parallel to that of the

advancing elements of the shaping bed, by blowing air under the sheet in a region situated upstream of its line of contact with the roller to tilt the hardened glass sheet about the roller to drop down onto the conveyor belt in the overturned state.

Claim 36 (New): The method as claimed in claim 29, wherein the glass sheets are caused to travel over the shaping bed along a descending path, backing rollers being associated with the advancing elements of the shaping bed in every zone thereof in which the sheets need to be retained, and wherein the hardened glass sheets are recovered on leaving the shaping bed by being deposited on a conveyor belt and then taken over on a roller conveyor or by being directly deposited on a roller conveyor transferred toward an exit point.

Claim 37 (New): The method as claimed in claim 33, wherein perforated or multi-strap conveyor belts are used to allow cooling by blowing in air from underneath onto the lower face of the transported glass sheets.

Claim 38 (New): The method as claimed in claim 29, wherein the advancing elements of the shaping bed are chosen from among rods having an axis of symmetry, including cylindrical, conical and waisted/barreled rods, and rotating on themselves, and cambered or curved elements that are surrounded by rotating tubular sleeves, shapes of the advancing elements configured to change along the shaping zone of the shaping bed.

Claim 39 (New): The method as claimed in claim 29, wherein the glass sheets being bent is carried out with a radius of curvature of the shaping bed of a line parallel to the direction of travel of 1 to 2 meters, and a radius of curvature of a line perpendicular to the direction of travel of 5 meters to infinity.

Claim 40 (New): The method according to claim 29, wherein the glass sheets which have assumed their shape at a temperature of 600 to 700°C are caused to travel.

Claim 41 (New): The method as claimed in claim 29, wherein the glass sheets are subjected to tempering in the tempering zone of the shaping bed by exposing the glass sheets to air at a pressure of 0.98×10^4 Pa to 2.94×10^4 Pa (1000 to 3000 mm water column).

Claim 42 (New): The method as claimed in claim 29, wherein air is blown in continuously over at least one face of the glass sheets having begun to be shaped and before the glass sheets enter the cooling or tempering zone, under conditions capable of asymmetrically influencing a final concavity of the bent glass sheets by comparison with a concavity that the final bending would have given without the blowing.

Claim 43 (New): The method as claimed in claim 29, wherein the bending operation is carried out on glass sheets having a thickness of 1 to 6 mm.

Claim 44 (New): The method as claimed in claim 29, wherein the distance between the glass sheets on the shaping bed is adjusted to a value of 2 to 20 cm.

Claim 45 (New): The method as claimed in claim 29, wherein the hardened bent glass sheets are obtained at a rate of at least one sheet every four seconds.

Claim 46 (New): A machine for bending glass sheets comprising:
means for causing glass sheets that have been brought to their softening temperature beforehand to travel over a shaping bed of advancing elements for advancing the glass sheets which are arranged along a path having a circular arc-shaped profile, wherein the shaping bed extends over a circular arc of more than 90°; and
means for taking over the bent glass sheets, on leaving the shaping bed, in a direction opposite that in which the glass sheets were fed in.

Claim 47 (New): The machine as claimed in claim 46, wherein a path of travel of the glass sheets is ascending, and wherein the means for taking over the glass sheets comprises means for overturning the glass sheets before they are recovered on a conveyor belt.

Claim 48 (New): The machine as claimed in claim 47, wherein the overturning means includes an idle roller whose axis is parallel to that of the advancing elements of the shaping bed, arranged at a height such that the glass sheets ejected from the shaping bed strike, by way of their front lower end edge, against an upper part of the idle roller.

Claim 49 (New): The machine as claimed in claim 47, wherein the overturning means includes a roller whose axis is parallel to that of the advancing elements of the shaping bed, arranged at a height such that the glass sheets ejected from the shaping bed are applied to the roller by way of their lower face, means being provided to tilt the hardened glass sheet about the roller.

Claim 50 (New): The machine as claimed in claim 46, wherein a path of travel of the glass sheets is descending, and wherein the means for taking over the glass sheets includes recovery means in a form of a conveyor belt or roller conveyor.

Claim 51 (New): The machine as claimed in claim 47, wherein the conveyor belt is perforated or multi-strap conveyor belts.

Claim 52 (New): The machine as claimed in claim 46, wherein the advancing elements of the shaping bed are chosen from among rods having an axis of symmetry, including cylindrical, conical and waisted/barreled rods, and rotating on themselves, and cambered or curved elements that are surrounded by rotating tubular sleeves, shapes of the advancing elements configured to change along the shaping zone of the shaping bed.

Claim 53 (New): The machine as claimed in claim 46, wherein backing rollers are associated with the advancing elements of the shaping bed in every zone thereof in which there is a requirement to retain the glass sheets.

Claim 54 (New): The machine as claimed in claim 46, further comprising means for tempering or cooling the glass sheets once the glass sheets have been shaped, the means for tempering or cooling including tempering blow-boxes each including nozzles arranged in arrays and directed between two adjacent forwarding elements of the shaping bed.

Claim 55 (New): The machine as claimed in claim 46, further comprising at least one nozzle for continuously blowing in air, arranged at a point on a line of travel of the glass sheets after the glass sheets have begun to be shaped and before the glass sheets enter the

cooling or tempering zone, the nozzle or nozzles being arranged so that air is blown asymmetrically onto the glass sheets and adjusted so that the blowing of air influences a final concavity of the bent glass sheets by comparison with a concavity that the final bending would have given without the blowing.

Claim 56 (New): Bent glass sheets obtained or capable of being obtained by the method as defined in claim 29.